



# DOG GROOMING CERTIFICATION PROS AND CONS



**QC PET STUDIES**



## *Dog Grooming Certification Pros and Cons*

So you want to take the plunge and become a certified dog groomer, congratulations!

Dog grooming is a thriving industry—people love their furry companions! While most owners will do regular basic grooming to take care of their dogs, some grooming tasks are much harder and owners may not possess the expertise or equipment to do it themselves—that's where you come in.

A professional dog groomer knows all the ins-and-outs of dog grooming and has all the equipment and experience to back it up. Some people get into the dog grooming industry by shadowing an experienced professional, while others opt for more formal training. If you decide that formal is the right option for you, you'll finish your training with a physical certificate!

It will take more than just a few clicks on Google to find out if you'll need a certificate to work as a groomer in your area, but here's a quick guide to get you started. We'll walk you through figuring out what obtaining a certification means as well as the pros and cons of certification before you start your dream career.





## *What does it mean to become a professional dog groomer?*

Becoming a professional dog groomer is more than just the out-of-the-box grooming you see on televised grooming competitions. Yes, groomers do occasionally find themselves spraying dogs with strawberry-banana-smoothie-scented cologne, or coloring their hair (with hair chalk!) in pastel colors, but professional dog groomers don't just deal with aesthetic styling.

Professional dog groomers are trained to provide a wide range of services that aid in an animal's well-being. Your grooming education can occur in a variety of settings including grooming salons, brick-and-mortar schools, and online institutions. From simple nail clipping to shaving down a completely matted dog, being a dog groomer isn't easy. It takes a lot of hard work and patience to succeed in this field. After all, every appointment has two clients you have to make happy—the dog and his/her owner!



## *What does it mean to be “Certified”?*

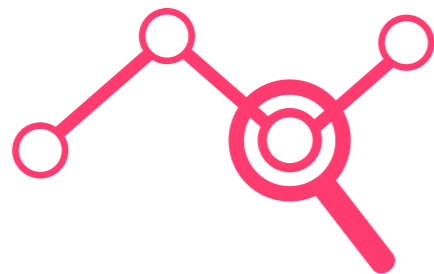
In general, dog grooming is an unregulated industry. In many regions, you don't need to have a certificate or license to work in the field. Rules and regulations change from region to region, so make sure that you check with local governing boards to find out what you need to get started in the business. While you don't necessarily need a certification, many groomers choose to get one.

Possessing a certificate means that you have undergone formal dog grooming training. A certification demonstrates to clients and employers that you have a strong knowledge of current grooming techniques, understand best safety practices when handling dogs, and that you've learned the theory behind grooming and know how to apply it in practical settings.



*While there are many pros to getting certified, some find that getting a certification may not be the best option for them.*

*Here are some pros and cons you should take into consideration:*



**Con:** *Diverts Focus*

Some people may find themselves exhausted in their efforts to funnel their money, creativity, time and energy into getting a certification. If you're not careful, you may stretch yourself out too thin and won't have the resources to invest in other aspects of your business.

It is equally important to spend time networking within the industry and establishing a client-base.



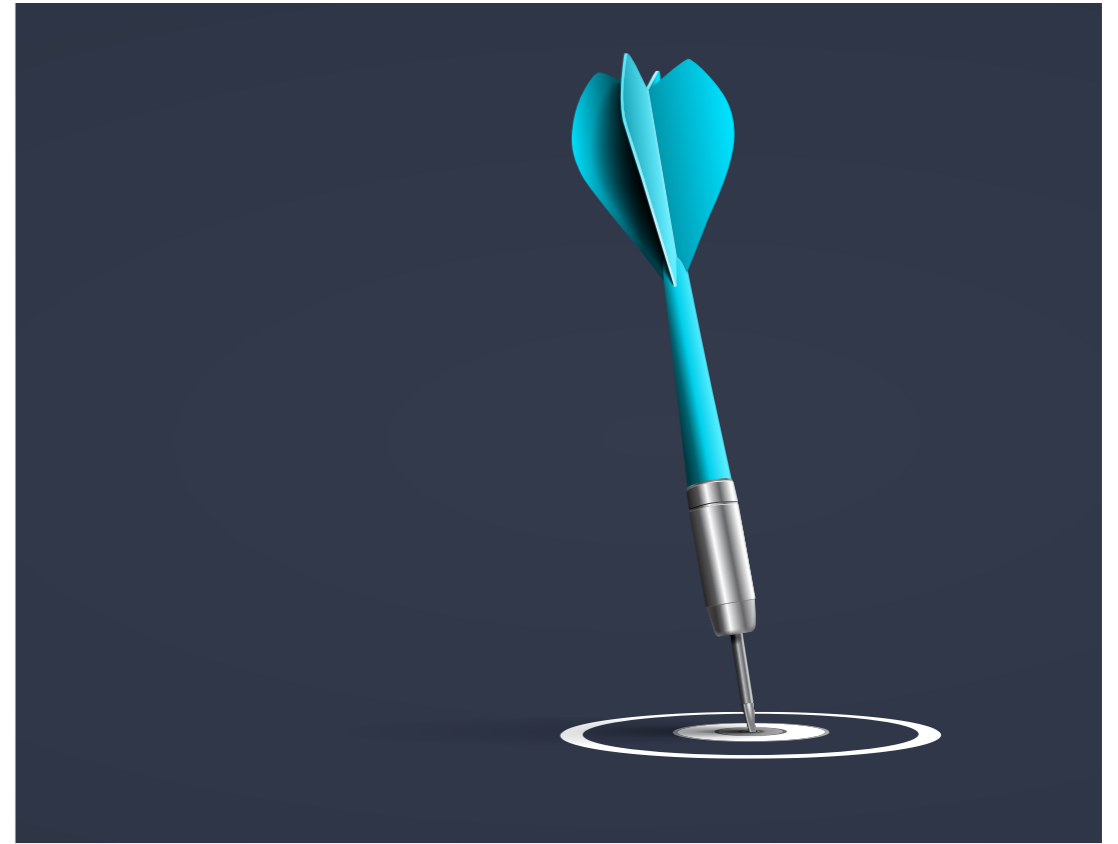
**Pro:** *Demonstrates competence*

Becoming certified is an ideal choice if you are just starting to get into the business. As a dog groomer who is just starting out, you may have little to no experience. As a result, you may find booking jobs or accumulating a sizeable client list difficult. By getting a certification, you can show your clients that you're a well-rounded groomer with professional training. Most dog grooming programs are comprehensive and make sure that you are able to effectively groom and take care of any dog that walks through the door.



### *Con: Ongoing Certification fees*

While some certification programs will only require payment when you're initially getting your certification, other schools might charge you annual fees to maintain your certification. You should be diligent when researching different grooming schools and certification programs so that you won't be trapped in annual fees many years after your initial training.



### *Pro: A Competitive Advantage*

Having a certification can have a positive impact on your career prospects. Everyone seems to have a pet these days, so the dog grooming industry is growing as well. As a budding groomer, you'll have to convince dog owners to trust you to work with their pets. You'll also find some tough competition in those who have been in the business for many years, who are well-known in the area, and who have a strong clientele base. It may seem impossible to compete with them, but getting certified will make you a viable contender. Your physical certificate is a symbol of all your hard work, your passion for the industry, and your drive for success. You'll get comprehensive training that will set you apart from your competition and enable you to hit the ground running.



### *Con: Unregulated field*

The dog grooming industry is largely unregulated world-wide. In most cases, you won't need a certification to start your business in your region. You may have already established a strong client base, have a great reputation, and have extensive experience grooming all kinds of dogs. If you are already dominating your local grooming market, you could probably benefit by investing your money to participate in grooming competitions, expand your business, or ramp up your marketing efforts instead.



### *Pro: Membership with Professional Associations*

Many associations will only accept members who have undergone certain certification programs. Having memberships in prestigious professional associations can lend you credibility in your local industry. You'll also have access to exclusive industry benefits—networking, discounted grooming suppliers, etc.

Each association will have different benefits. In general, you can expect a business listing on the association's website, opportunities to network with your peers, access to member discounts on continuing education, newsletters, resource libraries, annual conferences and more!

These associations don't come free, though. You'll usually be expected to pay an annual fee for the privilege of a membership.

## How do I get certified?

If you've decided to get certified, the first thing you should do is buckle down and do some research to find a program that suits your needs.

*For example, if you're...*

- Tight on a budget, then you'll need a relatively inexpensive option
- Aren't able to travel far distances, then you'll need one that is close to home or doesn't require you to leave your house (online distance learning)
- Working full time, then you'll need a flexible program to fit in with your busy schedule

While there are no governmental education requirements or programs for dog groomers, there are federally registered national associations and certification programs worth looking into.

Some organizations don't offer their own dog grooming training but exist as networks for professional groomers who have been tested against a common standard. When you register for their certification tests, they expect that you have already had training elsewhere and want to pursue further certification from these national associations.

While obtaining these certifications and association membership is optional, it's a great idea! You'll have access to the previously mentioned membership benefits, and additional certifications show that you're passionate and credible with a drive to learn and be great at what you do.





## Next steps...

Getting a certification isn't easy, but once you're done, it doesn't mean that it's smooth sailing from then on! Don't assume that the certification is a shortcut to success or a guarantee of employment! It takes a lot of time, resources, dedication, and passion to get your business off the ground.

With sophisticated certification training, you'll have a leg-up on the competition by having formal training in theory, technique and practical application. Depending on the program you choose, you may even receive business training to help you get your grooming business off the ground. Completing a certification is often the quickest and most flexible way to get a jumpstart on your career!

You may even decide that one certification may not be enough for you. A grooming foundations program will give you comprehensive training to work with the most popular dog breeds for basic grooming services. But as time goes on, industry grooming trends may change or you decide to go into creative grooming—you can definitely pick up these new skills by studying under a mentor, or you can opt for additional formal training. The choice is yours!

A pet grooming career can be an incredibly rewarding one. Whatever path you choose, make sure that you do your research to find the best option for you.



# ABOUT QC PET STUDIES

*QC Pet Studies, a division of QC Career School, offers distance education for pet professionals all over the world. Our goal is to offer the highest quality training in pet grooming possible in an accessible online environment.*



## *21-Day Full Refund Guarentee*

Once you receive your course materials, you'll have a full three weeks (21 days) to review your course. If you decide that the course does not match your needs, simply return the materials to the school, unused, and your fees will be immediately refunded!

## *A+ Rating with the Better Business Bureau*

QC is proud to hold the highest possible consumer satisfaction rating (A+) with the Better Business Bureau. Join the thousands of students who have taken a QC program and launched a successful career!

## *Online Pet Grooming Course: Coming Soon*

Excited to start a career in dog grooming? QC Pet Studies is launching a comprehensive grooming course that will help you jump start your career. Head over to our website for more information!



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